

Forest group in Flanders (Belgium)



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-Developing multifunctional forest !



Content

1. The forest in Flanders

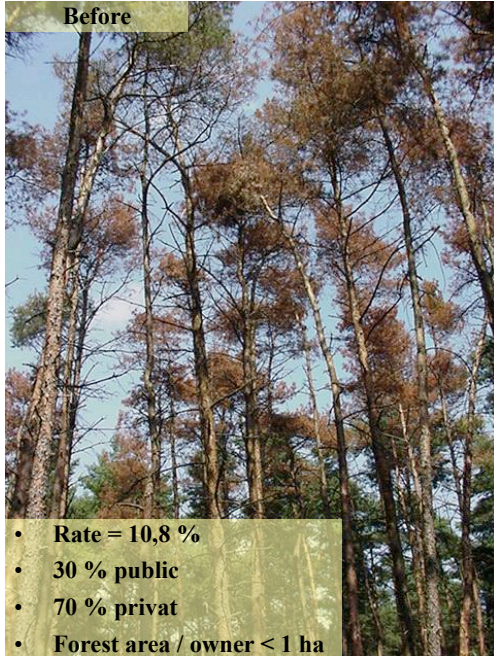
2. 'Bosgroep': a new concept

3. Working method

4. Results

5. Pitfalls and challenges

Before



Privat forest

- Not or badly managed
- Bad implementation of the different functions of the forest

- Economical function

BAD !

- Ecological value

LOW !

- Social function - Accessibility

PROBLEMS !

- Rate = 10,8 %
- 30 % public
- 70 % privat
- Forest area / owner < 1 ha

Problems

- Extremely fragmented forest ownership
- Lack of know-how
- Lack of confidence and motivation
- Fear of administration & legislation
- Helpless against over-recreation/dumping of waste

How to solve ?



How to solve ?

Option 1 (cfr. NL, CA, FIN)
→ Commercial
→ government = help to start
→ selfsufficing

Option 2
→ non-commercial
→ government = 100 %
subventions

Option 3 (cfr. D)
→ Non-commercial
→ Government = employer
→ Government = manager

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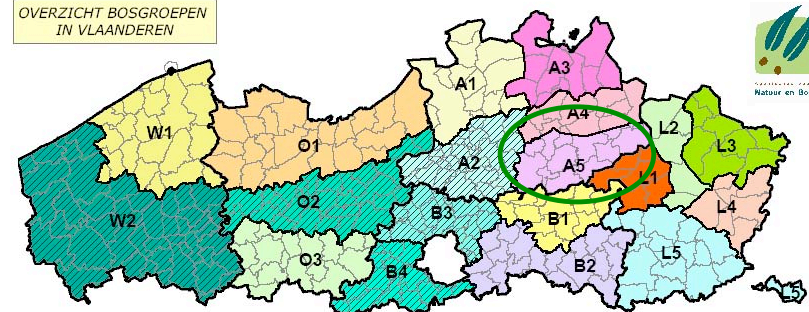
What ?

- Non profit organisation
- By and for forest owners, mainly private
- Support in forest management
- Give forest owner a voice
- Flemish government subsidies
- Improve the different forest functions

WIN-WIN situation (government – owners)

Forest groups in Flanders

OVERZICHT BOSGROEPEN
IN VLAANDEREN



Flandres

19 forest groups

2009: 8.194 membres (5-10 %)

43.849 ha (30 %)

Forest group Zuiderkempen

2009: 1.008 membres (15 -20 %)

2.905 ha (38 %)

What can you expect from a bosgroep?

No

- Take charge of Management
- Provide subsidies
- Forcing owners
- Recording warrants
- Owners syndicate

Yes

- Stimulate management
- Channeling subsidies
- The owner decides
- Stimulate owners
- Neutral platform

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Working method

How stimulate sustainable forest management ?

How to optimise the different functions ?



Support by the forest owner and population

$$E = Q \times A$$



1. Psychologic approach
2. Technical approach

1. Psychological approach: psychologist

3 challenges

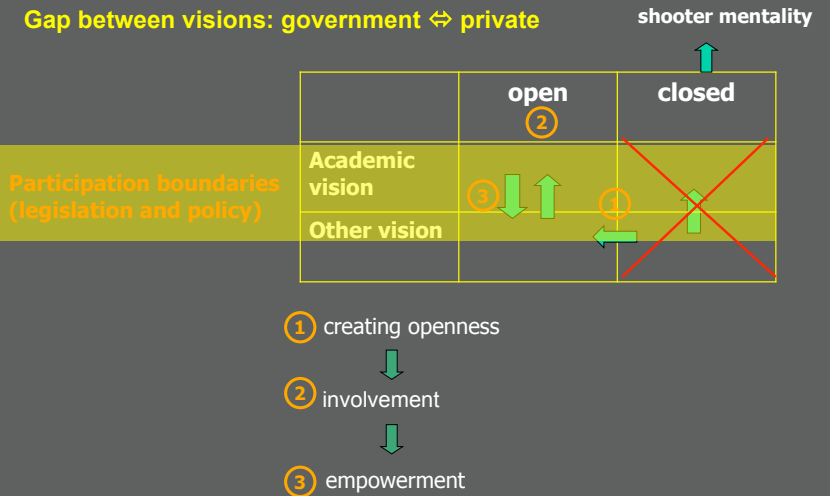


1. Build confidence and motivation
2. Develop learning processes
3. Develop supported long term visions

1. Build confidence and motivation

- Owners maintain control over property
- Free advice without engagement
- Respect the objectives of owners
- Neutral and independent
- Voluntary and easy membership
- Reduce the elements that remove motivation (administration (for free), costs (fees for collective sale of timber only 5-10-15% , paternalism)

2. Develop learning processes



3. Develop supported long term visions

- Participatory and integral approach
- Forest group = neutral platform for discussion
- Increasing the possibilities of management
- Balancing individual interests and those of the society
- Partnership



2. Practical approach – engineer

2 challenges



1. Fighting ignorance and offering services
2. How to deal with fragmentation ?

1. Fighting ignorance and offering services



Training courses



Technical and administrative support



Information walks



Selling of wood



Aid for execution of uneconomical work



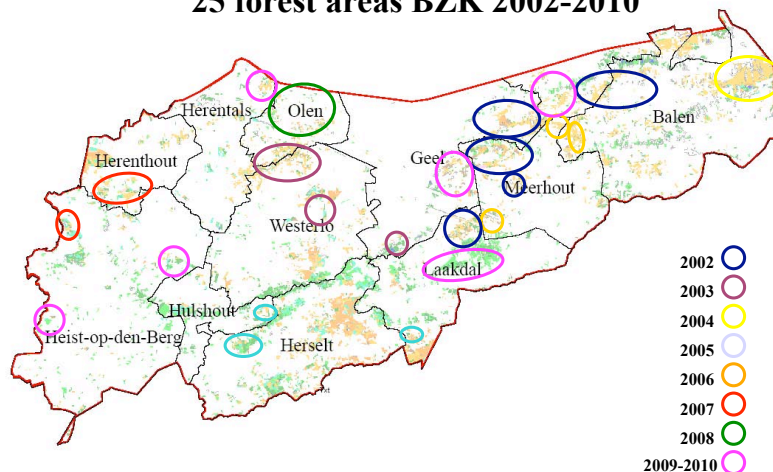
Newsletter

2. How to deal with fragmentation ?

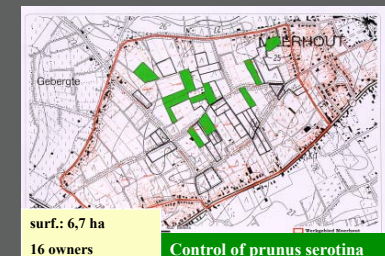
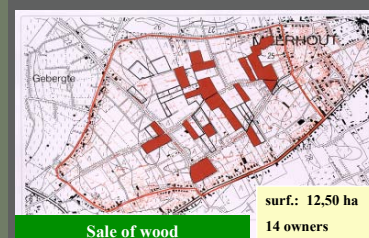
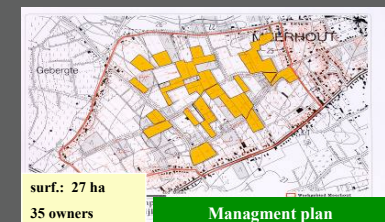
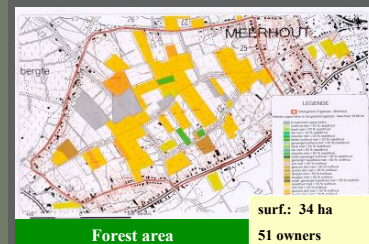
- Regional approach based on forest areas
- Stimulating collective management

Regional approach based on forest areas

25 forest areas BZK 2002-2010



Stimulating collective management



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Forest Group Zuiderkempen

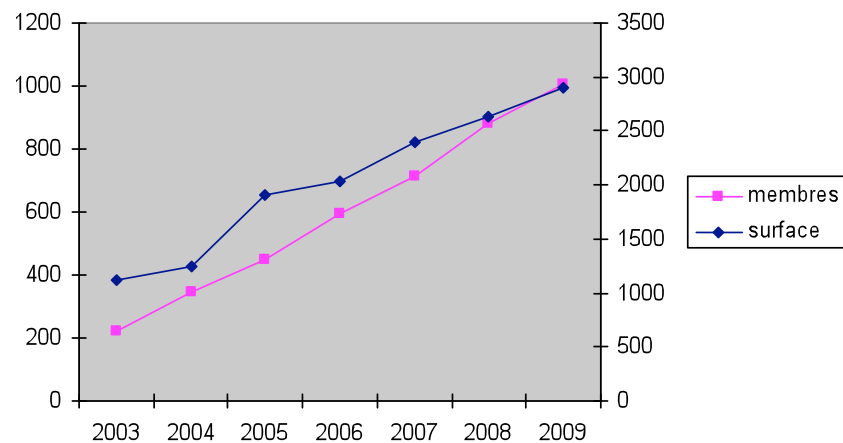
- ✓ General
- ✓ Economical
- ✓ Ecological
- ✓ Social



General

- Growth of 150 membres and 450 ha / year
- Management plans: 2-3 forest areas/year (1000 ha)
- Participation rate: 50 % surface // owners 31 % (25 % - 70 %)

Growth



(66 % < 1 ha, 26 % 1-5 ha, 8% > 5 ha)

Economical

No management → Management (plan)

1. Job creation
2. Selling and harvesting of timber
3. Touristic income

1. Job Creation



750 days / year
100 à 200 contracts / an
200 à 300 ha of forest



2. Selling and harvesting of timber



5.000 to 15.000 m³ / year



Example 2010: collective sales of pine



Lot Keiheuvel : 47 owners 2500 m³



Lot Volmolen : 12 owners 880 m³



Lot Winkelomheide : 9 owners 1572 m³



Lot Grees : 4 owners 457 m³

3. Touristic income

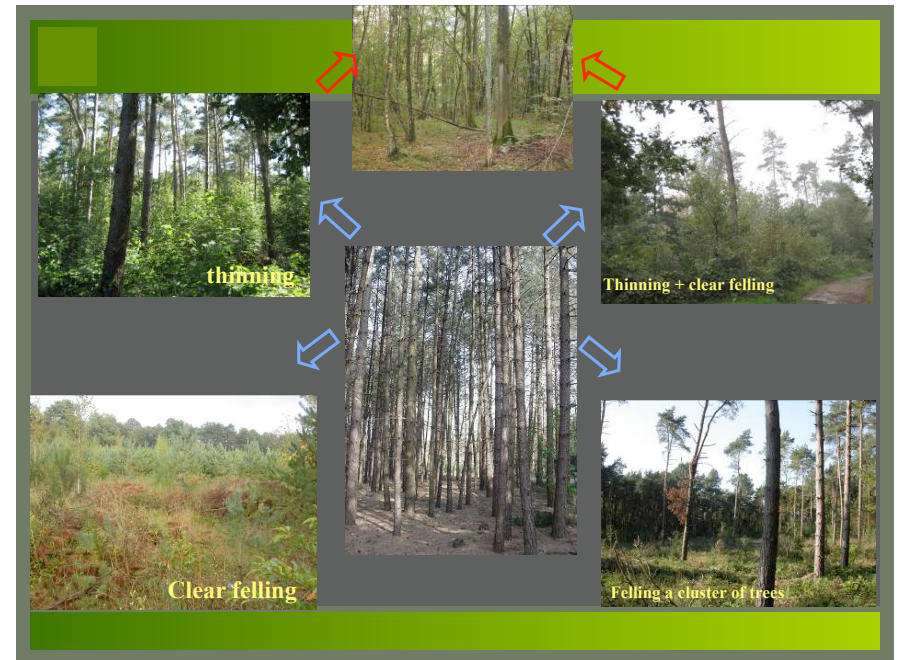
- developing a network of road junctions for walkers, cyclists and horsemen
- starting (no data of visitors)

Ecological

Purpose: criteria of sustainable forest management

Focus:

- first listening to people
- Try to resolve their problems
- Slow learning and confidence process
- Developing a long term vision



Ecological projects



Protection of biodiversity



Searching for alternatives for exotic species

Natura-2000 areas



NATURA 2000 GEBIEDEN

1:40.000



Bosgroep Zuiderkempen vzw.

Social

Flandres: high pressure – illegal use

Focus:

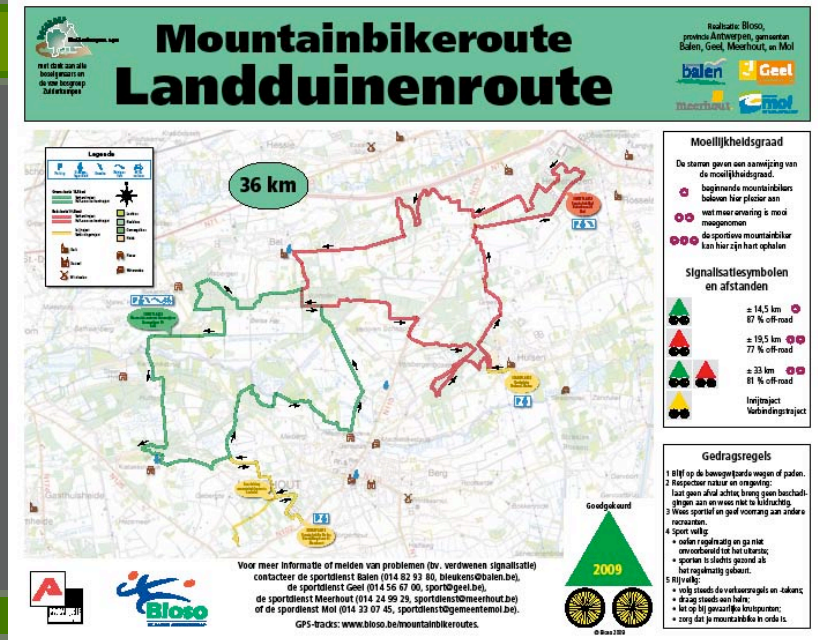
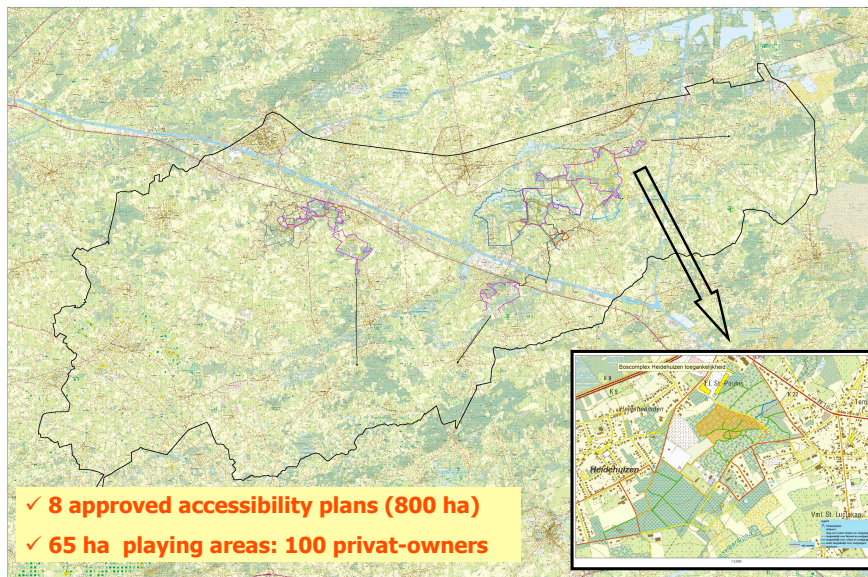
- first listening to people
- Try to resolve their problems
- Searching for the most well-balanced solution for everyone
- Developing accessibility plans

Control



- ✓ Waste
- ✓ Dangerous trees
- ✓ Illegal tracks

Development of a network of roads for recreation



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Pitfalls and challenges

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Uneconomical approach | ➔ | Dependency of subsidies |
| Distortion of competition | ➔ | What is uneconomical ? |
| Tension government – forest group | ➔ | Management of public forest
Uneconomical approach
Neutral position of forest group |
| Continuity | ➔ | Collective approach => more receivings
Voluntary work |

How to guarantee continuity by volunteers ?



Learnings

- ✓ The key to success is the respectful approach
- ✓ Collective management is possible
- ✓ Participation increases the public support and causes learning processes
- ✓ Private owners are open to the interests of the community
- ✓ The approach of the forest group causes a sustainable implementation of multifunctional forest management at relative low cost